

Yaphank Bennie Tries Scouting Work

Tells Friend Barney of His Ambition to Gain Medals and Reproves Gertie, but First Practice at Night Proves to Have an End Most Discouraging to a Hero

By FRAZIER HUNT.

CAMP UFFON,
Monday night, Jan. 28.

FRIEND BARNEY: Well I have been feeling pretty downhearted lately and I can tell you Barney that the wimmin of America are to blame and that they should ought to be ashamed of themselves over the way some of them trete the brave solder boys who have offered there lives so that the weaker sex can keep right on catching poor mails in there spider webs.

Take what that dame that come out to see me but who I turned away in scorn done to me Saturday forinsance. Here I was all excited over seein some beautiful little girl and even having my whole future mapped out for me and her and then that scare crow come out and it give me a shock that I will never again be as good a man again as I once was.

Well I have made up my mind to one thing Barney and that is that I am going to be a pure military man from now on and that nothing is going to detract me from my determination to be a officer and win some medals and come back with medals on my chest and then I will say to all these weaker sex that have tried to make a fool over themselves over me, I will say, You it was who tried to ruin my life but you have faled miserably for I am a solder and I have done my duty. And I guess that will make a lot of them dames feel mighty chepe, I guess.

But I should worry about dames much after all for I guess we will be in Franse in about a month and then we wont have time to think of much else but just whipping them Hunns.

In the first place us Americans is bigger men fisically right now than any of them other birds and then right now we have only got the flower of our land.

Them Hunns has had the best men they got killed of but of course they have got a lot of fight left but I guess we will make em think fight when we get going strong over there. And Barney don't get all excited about all this Congress stuff—us solders is well looked after and every one of us has got a Lee-Enfield rifle and it wont be very long until there is plenty of cannon and machine guns.

Its to bad they cant make cannon and machine guns out of bone Barney for if they could they could get enough out of Congress members to make a couple of millun machine guns and 500,000 cannons with. Yours, BENNIE.

Gertie Is Reproved.

Tuesday night.

DEAR GERTIE: I dont see how you can aense me so unjustly as to say that I must have someone else I am deeply interested in or I would have come in and saw you Saturday or at least wrote you. You should ought to be ashamed of yourself to even think such a thing as that Gertie especially when you know that I dont never think of nothing else but the army and that I have dedicated my life to my country and that outside of you no woman counts for even nought with me.

I have had a kind of a cold the past two or three days from exposure but I don't blame old U. Sam for it because we got lots of clothes and shoes and he gives us everything that he can buy. I guess maybe though if I had a sweater vest I would have ben all right but that aint Uncle Sams falt because there aint no way he can knit a millun and a have sweaters. The wimmin of America have to do that and if they would rather see the solder boys die like flies and catch bad colds and everything than knit them a few little sweater jackets then I guess we will just have to die like rats in a trap.

I will be able to get in to you see you Saturday night sure and we will have the time of your life you can bet. I guess we wont play the old Strand eh Gertie and then we will dance some afterwards someplace to, eh Gertie. You will not need to be ashamed of your solder boy either I can tell you Gertie. Well good by, Your old Jazz Tune Wiz, BENNIE.

Volunteers as a Scout.

Wednesday night.

BARNEY: Well Barney I guess I will not knock you dead or nothing like that when I tell you that I am going to be a

scoute and that is one of the most important things about an army and requires more branes and brawn and is only for the bravest men in the hole army.

To be a scoute you have got to have absolutely everything Barney and they is all chose carefully and have to be trusted men and friendly with the generals as they are often called to mingel with them freely.

And now I will tell you all about how I was chose for this special job and of how of all the 32000 men in camp they chose I as one.

Well this morning a Lutenant who is our batalion scout officer he got about 50 men together from our four companies in our second batalion and he said, We want a few very choise men for the most dangerous job in the most dangerous branch of the service—and we want nothin but volunteers.

You have got to know, he said, that your work will be out in no mans Land between the trenches and that often you have got to lay out there for 24 hours at a time hid because you can not get back without the Germans shootin you. And he said, Only men with lots of branes who can be absolutely relied on can serve because they have got to protect our regiment from surprise attack and then they have got to find out all about the enemy and tell it to us besides.

Well when he called for volunteers Barney I guess you can guess who was one of the first to step out. Well there was pretty near all them 50 stepped out and then the officer he give another speech. You understand this is very dangerous work, he said, and only them who is not afraid to kill a German at a seconds notice and is not afraid of anything is wanted, he said.

But of course you can bet Barney that I staid on and so now I am a Scoute and I am proud of it to. We are going to have a special school for us scoutes and we are going to learn all about how to scoute and when we get to Franse we will be prepared for them damn Hunns and I guess they had better not try any of there fresh stuff on us. So long, BENNIE.

Manages to Keep Warm.

Thursday night.

DEAR MAMA: I guess I have neglected writing you some Mama but I have been awful busy the past few days and I will try and do better the next time. I will be in town Saturday and then I will tell you all about what we have been doing and everything.

I wish that you could see our regiment marching now Mama for you would not beleve your own eyes that anybody could make such fine solders as we have been made in four months. And most of the boys have not been here anything like as long as four months and lots of them has not been in the regiment more than four weeks but you would not ever know it to see them.

What I was going to tell you, Mama was that you dont need to worry any more about the cold wether now because we have got new winter caps that are bear eats Mama. They are fine and warm and when the wether is bad we can pull them down over our ears and they keep us as warm as toast.

But when it is not so very cold we ware them with the bill tucked inside and the back of the cap to the front and then we ware them kind of over one eye and they look like we was Canaduns or belonged to the flying corpse. They certainly are jauntie and they make us look like about four millun bucks each. All the solder boys is crazy about them and right now according to the regulatuns they are not allowed to ware any other hat.

Dont worry none Mama about us solder boys because we have got all the cole in the world out here and our barucks is warm and fine. Will see you Saturday sure. Your own BENNIE.

Where Brains Count.

Thursday night.

BARNEY: Well we had our first scoute drill today and I want to tell you that it certainly is great stuff Barney. We was took out on a long hike in the woods and our officer who is lerning us this stuff give us different kinds of talks about what we

would have to do and how important our work was.

I tell you Barney that next to being commander general or something like that a scoute has got the most important job in the hole army. A lot of people think that aeroplains is the most important cheise but that is all a mistake and just because them birds think they have got elas they have ballied the American people into believing it to.

But I am right here to state Barney that one good scoute like I working around on his own brane power can lern more stuff and do the army more good in one night than a whole flock of them flying birds can in three weeks.

You dont suppose anybody especially them Hunns would let anybody see what they was doing in the daytime do you, and one of them aeroplains cant go up without being seen and everybody in eight miles knowing they was up. And they cant see nothin at night and they have to do all there observing when its light and you can bet that them pretzel eaters aint no fools and they dont do anything worth reporting when its light.

But you take us scoute boys. We do our work at night and we go quiet without making any noise and when we find out all that we want to know we sneke back to our own general and tell him what we seen. And then he calls up his other generals and we have a general conference and talk everything over pro and con and when we come to a decesion we nek on it right away.

So I will leve it to you Barney which is the most important us Scoutes or them flying birds which you are always reading so much about. But you never hear nothing about us because we are not that kind.

We dont beleve in publicity and because if the Germans knew who we was and saw our pictures etc in the papers they would be on the look out for us and would make traps for us. So all this I am writing you is strictly confidential. So long, BENNIE.

Plans Outing With Gertie.

Thursday night.

DEAR GERTIE: You have mistook me agin Gertie because I did not mean anything about you about what I said about them knit sweater vests. Of course I was not refering to you and besides I have got over my cold and am o. k. again now for a change.

Why I dont suppose I would even ware one of them sweater vests Gertie if I had a half of a dozen, and that is exactly the way that I feel about the matter. If I had one I would give it to one of the poor solder boys here who has not got one and who needs it far worst than I do.

I was glad to hear you say that the old town is full of solder boys on Saturday and Sunday, because Gertie we can show them what the real stuff is when I and you go down old Broadway together. My uniform fits me fine Gertie and if I had made a sucker out of myself and paid 80 bucks for my overcoat like some of these boob officers done I could have not got a better fit.

I am glad that you want to go to the Strand so bad because that is just what I want to do and that just shows how I and you agree even this far away on everything Gertie. And also about the dancing afterwards, Gertie. If I had thought it all out myself I could not have thought of anything better than just that. Oh you light fantistick Gertie.

Well I guess I better hang up Gertie or the operator will be sticking me another gitney for over time. Good by, Your old Wiz BENNIE.

Night in No Man's Land.

Friday supper time.

BARNEY: Well I guess that this will be a peace of news for you that will just about knock your eye out Barney. Tonight we are going to have our first night scoute practice and of course I am going along as one of the prinsiple scoutes.

We are going out to the trench system where we have got 400 yards of trenches just like they are in Franse and we are going to have practise just like we was actually fighting over there. We had a lecture all about it this afternoon and the officer he explained just how the scoutes had to crawl out in no mans Land on there hands and face and crawl up to the German wire entanglements and then

crawl under them sometimes and find out all about what the Hunns was doing and whether or not they was libel to attack us that night or not.

Well we have all kinds of different things to do and it is all very dangerous and requires only the finest branes and brawn like I forinsance.

But what I was going to tell you about was our trench system out here. It is a bare cat Barney and has got everything that the trenches have where the fighting is going on.

This is only one trench system and across an open space about 100 yds. wide there is an enemy trench system that is the same as ours. Well all that is where we are going to work tonight in our scoute practise.

I will tell you all about it tomorrow night or Sunday when I see you in the city. Yours, BENNIE.

Downfall of a Scout.

Saturday 3 p m

Telegram to Gertie

Am in hospital can not keep date. Sorry for you. BENNIE.

Saturday night.

BARNEY: I am writing this proped up in bed over here at the Base Hospital and I guess that my carere as a Scoute is just about ended and that I may never live to get to Franse, but I will die a hero just the same and I will get a military funeral and everything including shots fired over my grave and a flag draped over me.

Them is pretty sad thoughts but this is no joking matter being in a military hospital in such shape as I am in.

But first I must tell you how it was that I am here and how it looks now like I would never be a Scoute again.

Well last night about 8 o'clock we went out for our first night practise. The enemy is over there in them other trenches our officer whispered pointing at the same time across some no mans Land that it was so dark you couldnt see nothing at all. I want three of you Scoutes to crawl over there and report just exactly what you see, he said. If there aint no Germans in them trenches why come back and report that, he said. And dont forget to find out everything and all about how the land is, he said.

Well of course I volunteered right away and without giving no instruction of any kind he just said, All right start out and remember that silence is golden.

Well after we got started I heard him say something about not falling in any place but it was so indistinct that I didnt know just what it was. And that is where that officer is to blame and he should ought to be cortemarshaled.

How did I know what was out there. I didnt know whether there was holes or mountains or what. But I went right on out there on my hands and face like I was my duty and I musta crawled about a mile, anyway it felt that far, and I was crawling kind of sideways when Wham!

Well do you know what happened. Well I fell seven feet into that enemy trench and I broke my left arm above the elbow by falling on my rifle and I dislocated some bones around my hip and musta fractured my skull in a couple of places and was very badly injured internally.

Well of course being almost killed I let out a yell in my pain and in about ten seconds the Lutenant Coffey and the other Scoutes come running over and when they seen what terrible conditun I was in they looked very grave to each other and begun whispering.

My Gawd, this is certainly awful, I herd the Lutenant say, I guess we better rush him to the hospital. And we mustnt let the newspapers get ahold of this, he whispered.

So here I am over here in the base Hospital and I wouldnt be surprised if it would be my downfal here Barney.

Anyway I am through with the Scoutes forever Bennie and if I ever do get out of here by any chaust I guess I will go in for something safe and sane like flying.

BENNIE.

Telegram to Benny's mother.

Your son Bennie in hospital with broken arm. Nothing serious.

LIEUTENANT J. D. COFFEY.